

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An electronic image capture apparatus comprising:

an image detecting device adapted to capture a set of sub-images or tiles corresponding to different areas of a document at known locations and a processor adapted to receive the set of sub-images produced by the device and to process the sub-images to form a machine-readable text document equivalent to the portion of the document covered by the set of sub-images; wherein:

the processor includes an optical character recognition sub-routine which is adapted to produce a first set of processable data files which each comprise a data set of characters corresponding to characters appearing in a respective sub-image in the set and the relative location of the characters in that sub-image;

the processor establishes a co-ordinate system which defines a template of the machine readable document whereby any point in the imaged document can be uniquely identified by its co-ordinate in the machine readable text document;

the processor establishes a second co-ordinate system for each sub-image;

the processor, after optical character recognition, stores in the processable data files the characters located in each sub-image along with their location in the second co-ordinate frame; and

the processor is adapted to stitch together the characters stored in the data files to produce a machine readable text document.

2. (original) An electronic image capture apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the image detecting device comprises an electronic camera having a detector, a lens having a field of view which is adapted to limit the radiation incident upon the detector to that within the field of view, an actuator for moving the field of view of the camera relative to the document to be imaged, and a controller for controlling the actuator to move the field of view of the camera across the document so as to capture the set of sub-images or tiles.

3. (previously amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the data in the first set of processable data files is stitched together to produce the machine readable document by allocating characters in the data files onto corresponding locations in a spatial template of the machine readable document.

4. (cancelled)

5. (cancelled)

6. (currently amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 5 1 wherein the first and second co-ordinate systems are the same or are related through a transform whereby each character stored in a processable data file can be mapped onto the co-ordinate frame of the machine readable document.

7. (previously amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the sub-images overlap spatially at least by the width of the largest character which is expected in the document.

8. (previously amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 1 wherein where only one data file contains a character at a given location in the machine readable text document the processor is adapted to allocate that character to that location.

9. (original) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 8 wherein if none of the processable data files contain a character for a location in the machine-readable text document then a space is entered in the text document at that location.

10. (previously amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 8 wherein the processor is adapted to determine the reliability of the data in the processable data files.

11. (previously amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 10 wherein in the event that two or more data files contain different characters corresponding to the same location in the machine readable text file the processor is adapted to select which data to allocate based on the reliability of the data.

12. (previously amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 10 wherein the processor is adapted to

determine the reliability of the data by applying one or more logical rules to the data in the processable data files.

13. (original) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 12 wherein the logical rules include using the character which is located furthest away from the edge of a sub-image to construct the machine readable document if there is a conflict.

14. (previously amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the processor is adapted to identify lines of text within each processable data file from the spatial distribution of the characters identified within each sub-image.

15. (previously amended) An electronic imaging apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the data in the processable data files comprises ASCII characters.

16 - 21. (cancelled)